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Committee of Experts on Public Administration

Report on the ninth session (19-23 April 2010)

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Note

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Summary

The present report contains the summary and recommendations of the ninth session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, held at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 23 April 2010. The Committee, which was established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2001/45, consists of 24 experts appointed in their personal capacity for a four-year period. The Committee dealt with the following substantive items: (a) challenges to and opportunities for public administration in the context of the financial and economic crisis; (b) review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance; and (c) public administration perspective on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women.

Based on the discussion of the above-mentioned topics, the Committee recommended to the Council a draft resolution for its consideration and adoption.

30 April 2010

Contents

Chapter		*Page*
I.	Draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council	1
II.	Organization of the session	4
	A. Duration of the session	4
	B. Attendance	4
	C. Agenda	4
	D. Election of officers	5
III.	Summary of proceedings and conclusions	6
	A. Work of the Committee of Experts	6
	B. Challenges to and opportunities for public administration in the context of the financial and economic crisis	6
	C. Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance	14
	D. Public administration perspective on the theme of the annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council: implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women	15
	E. Session on innovative ways to enrich collaboration between the Committee and the Division	18
	F. Proposed programme of work and agenda for the next session of the Committee of Experts and preliminary review of the draft report of the Committee	19
Annex		
	List of documents	21

Chapter I

Draft resolution recommended for adoption by the Economic and Social Council

The Committee of Experts on Public Administration recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its ninth session

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions 2002/40 of 19 December 2002, 2003/60 of 25 July 2003, 2005/3 of 31 March 2005, 2005/55 of 21 October 2005, 2006/47 of 28 July 2006, 2007/38 of 4 October 2007, 2008/32 of 25 July 2008 and 2009/18 of 29 July 2009, all on public administration and development,

Referring to General Assembly resolutions 50/225 of 19 April 1996, 56/213 of 21 December 2001, 57/277 of 20 December 2002, 58/231 of 23 December 2003, 59/55 of 2 December 2004 and 60/34 of 30 November 2005, all on public administration and development, and resolutions 63/202 of 19 December 2008 and 64/187 of 21 December 2009, on information and communication technologies for development,

Taking note of the support being provided by the United Nations Programme on Public Administration and Finance to Member States through institutional and human resources capacity development in the public sector, electronic/mobile government development, development management and citizen engagement,

Recognizing the significant work of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration in providing advice to the Economic and Social Council aimed at the advancement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Underscoring the urgent necessity to address the causes, social consequences and governance challenges of the recent crises, including but not restricted to the global financial and economic crisis, towards strengthening the role of government in building effective public administration institutions, human resources, management processes and tools, and citizen involvement in policymaking,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the conclusions and recommendations contained in the report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration at its ninth session on the challenges to and opportunities for public administration in the context of the financial and economic crisis and on the theme of the 2010 annual ministerial review, "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women";

2. *Welcomes* the focus of the Committee on "Public governance for results to improve the quality of human life", in particular for accelerated achievement of the internationally agreed development agenda, including the Millennium Development Goals, as the theme of its multi-year programme, 2011-2013;

3. *Also welcomes* the recommendation of the Committee that, in addressing the social effects of the financial and economic crisis, people-centred strategies be at the core of government policies, and that citizens, as well as civil society, be fully participatory in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of these policies to enhance their efficacy and effectiveness;

4. *Further welcomes* the 1977 Lima Declaration of Guidelines on Auditing Precepts and the Mexico Declaration on Supreme Audit Institutions Independence, which draw on the work of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions in promoting greater transparency, accountability and efficient and effective receipt and use of public resources for the benefit of citizens, and proposes the development of a road map for embedding these principles eventually into international law;

5. *Invites* the General Assembly to:

(a) Recognize in all relevant deliberations that the financial and economic crisis has demonstrated the need for the central role of public administration and public governance in implementing internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) Also recognize that gender equality remains an important goal and that information and communications technology provides a potent tool for advancing women's empowerment, as long as its risks are managed;

(c) Consider a framework for regular consultations between the Committee of Experts on Public Administration and a panel of independent economic experts, pursuant to resolution 63/303, paragraph 56 (e), in due recognition of the importance of public administration and its capacities for implementation in international actions and dialogue on crises and their impact on development;

6. *Encourages* Member States to:

(a) Recognize that Governments and public administration should be repositioned to manage economic and financial crises and their social consequences in affected countries, particularly to protect the vulnerable social groups within them, and to prevent such crises in the future;

(b) Also recognize that the effects of the crisis have been global, thus necessitating a new international regulatory architecture and use of the United Nations as the best forum in which to address these crisis-related issues, and that a global discussion is needed on its moral aspects of the crisis, including the enormous burden they impose on the public administrations of small and poor countries, particularly in achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(c) Formulate timely exit strategies from emergency responses to the crisis, where appropriate, while recognizing that successful adjustment requires long-term strategic planning;

(d) Recognize the need for a specific focus on the role of e-government in development, and make provision for sources of funding for e-government initiatives that are predictable, over a multi-year period;

7. *Requests* the Secretariat to continue to:

(a) Give due recognition to innovative public sector initiatives by Member States through the promotion and strengthening of United Nations Public Service Day and the United Nations Public Service Awards;

(b) Support further development of the United Nations Public Administration Network for partnership-building, knowledge-sharing and the exchange of best practices in the areas of public administration;

(c) Assist in the implementation of the Geneva Plan of Action of the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society[1] on e-government-related issues;

(d) Assist countries in public institutional and human resources development and development management in order to create policy space for the articulation of national development strategies, their effective implementation and full citizen engagement, with a special focus on developing countries, Africa, countries in transition and the least developed countries;

(e) Explore ways in which this crisis could be an opportunity to promote the green economy and low carbon solutions for development, particularly for countries that cannot do so on their own, while supporting the overall work of the United Nations concerning climate change;

(f) Collect data on gender equality in the context of many fields, particularly women's underrepresentation in public administration and high civil service positions;

8. *Also requests* the Secretariat to increase the depth and scope of its online and offline capacity development training and to continue to consolidate its products and services under its public administration knowledge space, with the aim of better assisting Member States in redefining, reforming, strengthening and innovating their public administration in general, and public service delivery in particular, according to their needs.

[1] See A/C.2/59/3, chap. I.

Chapter II
Organization of the session

A. Duration of the session

1. The Committee of Experts on Public Administration, established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2001/45, consists of 24 experts appointed in their personal capacity by the Council upon the nomination of the Secretary-General. The Committee held its ninth session at United Nations Headquarters from 19 to 23 April 2010.

B. Attendance

2. The session was attended by 18 members of the Committee. Observers from organizations of the United Nations system and from intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended.

3. The session was attended by the following Committee members: Luis F. Aguilar Villanueva (Mexico), Rowena Bethel (Bahamas), Vitoria Dias Diogo (Mozambique), Mikhail Dmitriev (Russian Federation), Bin Hao (China), Pan Suk Kim (Republic of Korea), Francisco Longo Martinez (Spain), Hyam Nashash (Jordan), Peter A. Anyang' Nyong'o (Kenya), Paul Oquist (Nicaragua), Marta Oyhanarte (Argentina), Odette Ramsingh (South Africa), Siripurapu Kesava Rao (India), Valeria Termini (Italy), Gwendoline Williams (Trinidad and Tobago), Susan L. Woodward (United States of America), Philip Yeo (Singapore) and Najat Zarrouk (Morocco).

4. Due to the ban on flights in European air space following the volcano eruption in Iceland, the following members could not attend: Meredith Edwards (Australia), Walter Fust (Switzerland), Mushtaq Khan (Bangladesh), Joseph Dion Ngute (Cameroon), Beatrice Margaret Saner (United Kingdom) and Jan Ziekow (Germany).

5. The list of observers who attended the session may be viewed on the United Nations Intranet (see http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/un-dpadm/unpan038305.pdf).

C. Agenda

6. The agenda of the Committee for its ninth session was as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Challenges to and opportunities for public administration in the context of the financial and economic crisis.
4. Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance.

5. Public administration perspective on implementing the internationally agreed development goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women.

6. Proposed programme of work and agenda for the tenth session of the Committee of Experts.

D. Election of officers

7. The following members are serving as Committee officers during the current session:

Chair:

Luis **Aguilar Villanueva** (Mexico)

Vice-Chairs:

Pan Suk **Kim** (Republic of Korea)
Walter **Fust** (Switzerland)
Peter **Anyang' Nyong'o** (Kenya)

Rapporteur:

Susan L. **Woodward** (United States of America)

Chapter III
Summary of proceedings and conclusions

A. Work of the Committee of Experts

8. At the opening session, the ad interim Chair, Mr. Anyang' Nyong'o, welcomed the experts and introduced the main theme of the session: "Challenges to and opportunities for public administration in the context of the financial and economic crisis". The challenge is threefold: the failure of institutions considered driving forces of a capitalist economy; increased doubt about the sanctity of liberal values; and uncertainties about what is to be done. What will be the role of government and political leadership in the innovation necessary to meet these challenges?

9. Two introductory speeches, given respectively by the President of the Economic and Social Council, Hamidon Ali, and the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Sha Zukang, framed the discussions of the Committee. Mr. Ali emphasized the increasing significance of "integrity, innovation and information" as the three "i"s in the future of governance, as we learn from past mistakes and attempt to restore people's trust. Mr. Sha underlined the opportunities for public administration when trust levels are at historic lows to make specific recommendations on financial reform, leadership communication strategies and government responses to the dire social implications of the crisis. Both the Chair and the speakers emphasized not only the value of the Committee's diverse mosaic of experience but also its common goal to provide impartial analyses and recommendations on the global financial and economic crisis, which, at its core, is a governance issue.

10. The brief statement on organizational matters by the Director of the Division for Public Administration and Development Management concluded the opening session. She explained the history of the Committee, its mandate and procedures and the formation of its agenda, including specific suggestions from outgoing members on how to invigorate Committee work and strengthen collaboration with the Division.

B. Challenges to and opportunities for public administration in the context of the financial and economic crisis

11. The note by the Secretariat (E/C.16/2009/2), along with inputs from Committee members, set the overall parameters for the Committee's discussions. It described the challenges posed by the recent global financial and economic crisis to public administration in the areas of leadership, policy coordination, transparency, public service delivery, vulnerability and regulation of the financial sector. The note also identified five windows of opportunity for public administration, created by the crisis: (a) building more effective public administration, institutions and processes geared to risk identification, prevention and management; (b) a potential rise in the prestige of public service; (c) enhancing citizen-centric e-government systems and approaches in policy design, monitoring and implementation; (d) redirecting public spending towards long-term development priorities, including internationally agreed development goals and the Millennium Development Goals; and (e) a stronger focus on the needs of the developing world.

Enhanced public governance for speedy and coordinated policy response

12. Mr. Rao analysed the ideological origins of the financial and economic crisis, including the paradigm shift on the role of government during the 1970s and 1980s, the resulting "short-termism" in decision-making, the greater vulnerability of countries owing to the globalization of finance but not of regulation, the capture of government by private interests and the role of technology in the spread of the crisis. Examples of successful cases in managing the crisis, China, India, and Canada, demonstrated the necessary role of national and global regulation and monitoring of banks and the financial system and the need to rebuild trust in government through moral values and integrity in public processes. The creation of more inclusive global forums would give countries with different developmental needs, particularly small countries, greater weight and voice in international decision-making.

13. Mr. Oquist gave a sobering account of the effects of the financial and economic crisis, arguing that no single country could provide solutions to those effects, but that all inhabited the damaged infrastructure of the financial tsunami, and thus stressed the need for a new global architecture based on a holistic approach to public governance, including actors at the local, national, regional and international levels. A road map to the new architecture should be based on the premise that global problems required global solutions, thus global financing, globally determined distribution and ensuing better public and global governance, such as global taxation and goods management, a global stability fund, a global equity fund and a United Nations committee of economic experts as well as greater recognition of current regional practices transforming reserve currency, trade and capital flows that would eventually lead to global negotiations.

14. Acknowledging the failure of the theory of market self-regulation and the inadequacy of the current international architecture, the Committee discussed three main criteria for public administrations worldwide in times of crisis: (a) the need to focus on institutional economic and social innovation rather than overemphasize risks; (b) the importance of proactive, participatory governance that is far more consultative, with democracy at the local level as part of the solution; and (c) understanding the failure of the idea of golden rules for all and the need to respect different national and regional situations.

15. Probing the question of global governance structures, the Committee emphasized the need to review global financing arrangements, particularly between international finance institutions and developing countries and to insist on more information and transparency about the source and evaluation of such funds. While protecting the strengths of the current global architecture, it was necessary to recognize and address its many weaknesses, its inequality and the need to have a global discussion on the principles of justice and a moral society, which the social implications of the current crisis had raised. The burden on pubic administration in smaller and poorer economies was enormous; the United Nations was the best place and forum in which to work on a comprehensive and balanced solution.

Leadership capacity-building in the public sector in the context of the financial and economic crisis

16. The presentation of Mr. Hao highlighted the effects of the financial and economic crisis on the Chinese economy, the Government measures taken in

response, and their effectiveness. The measures included (a) a significant increase in Government spending on livelihoods and infrastructure projects (roads and housing); (b) multiple measures to promote employment and preserve jobs; and (c) expansion of the basic social security system, including old age pensions and medical insurance. Mr. Hao argued that the effectiveness of those mechanisms was a product of leadership, defined as the capacity to develop and the capacity to improve.

17. Ms. Zarrouk laid out the challenges of the crisis for public administration and for leadership (which required making difficult choices in a timely manner about how to change the course of events). Leaders had the duty to provide objective, fair and balanced information on the diagnosis of the crisis, the policies in response and the anticipated impacts, despite the constraints on resources that the crisis imposed. The resulting opportunities included: (a) an enhanced role for public administration to assist leaders in fulfilling these duties; (b) recognition of needed social, economic and environmental public policies; and (c) a call for redefining private-public-people partnerships.

18. The Committee welcomed the focus on leadership as a corrective to the institutionalism of the past two decades, since the crisis had demonstrated the need to set priorities and sequencing, and the crucial role of human resources, its interdisciplinary training, ability to engage all segments of society and capacity for long-term perspectives beyond the political cycle of electoral democracies. Nonetheless, the effectiveness of the Chinese response demonstrated the great differences between countries with "fiscal space" and the many countries without such resources facing severe social outcomes. The centralizing effects of a crisis response in reaction to the failure of unregulated markets, and the scarcity of leadership and skills raised the question of balance. However, how would it be possible to know when one had gone too far in either direction? In finding balance, how did one diplomatically persuade leaders who were responsible for the crisis to acknowledge their role and to assess the State as well as market failures in causing the crisis?

19. Concluding that a stable, well-trained and well-remunerated professional civil service was indispensable to effective government in times of crisis and to restoring the trust of citizens in their State, the Committee warned against seeking simplistic solutions and encouraged, instead, respect for the complexity of governance in supporting long-term strategic planning and mobilizing all citizens and as many sectors of society as possible in decision-making.

Citizen-centred public service delivery

20. Ms. Ramsingh added more details to the crushing effects of the financial and economic crisis on daily lives in the developing world in order to reinforce the view that the purpose of all new regulations must be for the sake of citizens and be aimed at bettering their lives.

21. Ms. Oyhanarte argued that the global crisis offered opportunities: (a) to create a culture of cooperation and solidarity at the international level; (b) to rethink the role of the State; and (c) to extend citizen participation, particularly at the local level. At the local level, the growing role of information and communications technology could provide easy and open access to Government information, and its consequences for citizen engagement, and innovative strategies for public policy,

such as the 2003 United Nations Development Programme-supported citizen's audit on the quality of democratic practices in Argentine municipalities.

22. Mr. Anyang' Nyong'o reviewed State capacity in the historical context of the nature of the State in African countries since independence: hopefulness and development and then structural adjustment, which led to a dramatic decay in the ability to deliver services, as well as political corruption and loss of the idea that people must be at the centre of development. Despite changes in the nature of the State over four decades, the three initial fights remained: against poverty, against ignorance and against disease. One result of the massive decline in the quality of education as a result of structural adjustment policies was that few in African countries had the level of education to take advantage of the electronic (information and communications technology) tools of citizen-centric government. Instead, the solution was devolution of power (not just resources) according to the following principles for reinventing the State: that it be politically democratic, national in its social content and ethos, and economically developmental.

23. The Committee discussed examples representing cause for optimism in citizen-centred and participatory governance, from decentralization in current Mozambican reforms and self-help groups in India to the growing numbers of cases submitted to the United Nations Public Service Awards. It had taken the Argentinean case to demonstrate that often very small changes could have a large effect. Nonetheless, the goal should not solely be increased participation but empowerment. Thus, how did one build citizenship in that sense? The obstacles suggested ways in which citizen engagement in policymaking processes could be enhanced. These included: (a) access to information and communications technology and e-government to enhance citizen participation; (b) confronting the effects on the very nature of the State of growing inequality as a result of globalization; (c) the human and financial resources of local governments, particularly the tax system and revenue-sharing between central and local governments; (d) coordination issues when decision-making units proliferated, including regional integration (within a country); (e) training for public sector employees; and (f) explaining expert concepts in practice to Government officials and citizens.

Transparency and accountability

24. Mr. Kim noted the complexity of transparency and accountability, the reforms taking place in many developing countries and the remaining challenges and constraints, such as authoritarianism and the lack of social capital, of monitoring and evaluation, of participation, of rewards and proper disciplinary actions and of home-grown solutions. The most serious might be the lack of transformational leadership and political will in the implementation process.

25. Ms. Termini discussed the complexity of transparency, which might even require a shift in values and vision. The crisis was an opportunity for public administration to restore the trust of citizens in government by adopting the new paradigm of "open government", where government would become more accountable and transparent. In the old paradigm, citizens were clients and consumers of public services, whereas in the new, they were also partners, capable of co-producing public services and participating in policymaking. Central to these roles was access to information, quality information, enforcement and the fight against corruption, which was a significant obstacle to achieving the Millennium

Development Goals. The resulting "circuit of transparency" made participatory governance possible, while timely and trustworthy information was crucial for decision-making on economic policies. She suggested a priority focus on the capacity of: (a) national statistical offices to produce reliable data; (b) independent supreme audit institutions to promote accountability; (c) ombudsmen to ensure due process; and (d) public service charters to ensure monitoring of performance.

26. Mr. Longo also argued that public trust in the ability of Governments to respond effectively to the crisis depended on "open government", characterized by transparency (freedom of information, performance measurements and information for decision-making), accessibility (easy access by citizens to public processes), responsiveness (Governments being receptive to new ideas, demands and needs) and accountability (managing expectations within and outside Governments) in public affairs. E-government tools were essential to facilitating citizen access to public processes, reducing expenditures, improving coordination of services and decreasing the political costs of budget cuts and other unpopular measures. Openness — not an absolute good, which could conflict with other public values such as good performance, social equity, the right to privacy and democratic representation — was necessary but insufficient for ensuring public confidence in government.

27. Speaking on behalf of the International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions, Christian Ebener of the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations noted that the principal objective of supreme audit institutions was to promote responsive accountability, specifically by providing legislative bodies and the general public with information on the administrative activities of Governments. Thus, supreme audit institutions had to be guaranteed independence and given due mandate by law to investigate crisis-response measures in order to perform their watchdog functions effectively. To that end, it was proposed for the Committee to recommend that all Member States implement the Lima Declaration of Guidelines on Auditing Precepts and the Mexico Declaration on Supreme Audit Institution Independence.

28. The benefits of transparency and accountability were clear, Mr. Kim summarized, but the difficult question was "how". Members added that there were obstacles in the risk-averse culture of secrecy in public administration, the lack of citizen awareness of rights to information and its benefits, and the applicability of such tools as information and communications technology and e-government in contexts where oral traditions and the preference for personal contact dominated. Discussion of the "how" centred on systems of integrity, including administrative tools and processes to track, publicize and punish criminal acts, information campaigns with the public, codes of conduct and training for civil servants and reliable preservation of records. While quick access to user-friendly and relevant information and information management were necessary for transparent and accountable government, they depended for their success not only on formal regulations and institutions but also on informal rules, such as ethical norms and democratic values and political commitment.

Social and financial protection for vulnerable groups

29. The severity of the economic consequences of the financial and economic crisis had become a critical social question that presented an extraordinary challenge

to the public sector and Governments, according to the Chair, Mr. Aguilar Villaneuva.

30. Mr. Dmitriev declared that such social effects were still largely terra incognita because they were still unfolding, extremely complex and had yet to be researched. He thus set out an analytical framework for identifying types of vulnerabilities and the ability of Governments to provide social protection, which was a political imperative of the responses to the crisis. Pointing to public administration capacity as the key determinant of the response of Governments, he warned of the necessity to distinguish between short-term emergency responses and long-term development strategies in capacity-building and development, and that timely exit strategies were as important as rapid scaling up.

31. Variations in the responses of Governments depended on their vulnerability profile, fiscal space, existing social protection system, and public administrative capacity. The tools chosen must match the capacity of Governments and must not overlook the highly diverse and important informal mechanisms of social protection, which were necessary to complement formal legislation and capacity. More institutionalized means got narrowed quickly in a crisis and were influenced by information asymmetries, even in middle-income, transitional and post-transitional countries. Mr. Dmitriev maintained that the social protection systems were not well-equipped to cope adequately with vulnerability (for example, high levels of poverty and growing exclusion) because they tended to be crowded out by pensions, were too low in value, were over- or imprecisely targeted or lacked other necessary tools. Enhanced international governance and collective action were vital because, as the contraction of fiscal space was global, there were spillover effects and resulting global vulnerabilities and information asymmetries.

32. By teleconference, Ms. Edwards addressed the trade-offs and innovative mechanisms in public sector capacity to deliver social protection within the framework of citizen-centric policies. Since targeting was administratively costly, she focused on conditional cash transfers, now positively evaluated in many countries despite criticism that there could be a lack of community participation in their implementation. To be effective, she concluded, social protection measures needed to be integrated with economic and other social policies and always needed to be part of a dynamic learning process.

33. The Committee emphasized the political and institutional dimensions of addressing the social protection of vulnerable groups. These included: (a) enhancing public capacity to act fast when needed; (b) effective exit strategies following crisis-induced emergency responses; (c) recognizing that there was no exit strategy for countries in which there was no distinction in vulnerability between crisis conditions and general poverty and no fiscal space, and recognizing the need for innovative South-South funding schemes such as ALBA (Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas); and (d) viewing crises as opportunities for capacity innovation and growth, such as through the green economy, and for promoting a forum for multilateral global cooperation where poorer countries could have a stronger voice in negotiations with developed countries. Mr. Dmitriev added that the diversity of government programmes and the ingenuity shown in some countries demonstrated that no situation was totally constrained and hopeless.

A case study of Singapore

34. Mr. Yeo traced the stages of Singapore's economic development from labour-intensive to capital-intensive, and now to information-intensive, based on the promotion of new sectors while others declined. The shift was driven by the strategic foresight that an economy based only on cost efficiency was not sustainable in the long term. Singapore launched its research drive in 2000, after the Government had identified that area as a key engine of future economic growth. Twin hubs in research and development, the "Biopolis" and the "Fusionopolis", were established with a span of multiple research disciplines from bio-imaging to microelectronics, and had already contributed to substantial growth in manufacturing output, despite the financial and economic crisis.

35. The key to the new strategy was human capital. While land was being continually reclaimed by the sea, the key constraint was talent. With the view that "talent was international", Singapore's approach to human resources development was to build mid-term and long-term public sector human capital through scholarship programmes offered to young, talented individuals. The presentation of Mr. Yeo also detailed how Singapore's response to the global economic crisis paralleled that approach.

36. The Committee welcomed the presentation of Mr. Yeo and discussed ways its lessons might be applied elsewhere. Questioned about how Singapore was able to attract and retain young talent from abroad, how public administration contributed, and whether there might not be "growth fatigue", Mr. Yeo emphasized both the financial benefits of generous stipends and scholarships and the ambition of young individuals who come from poorer circumstances, while public servants have very high status and are paid extremely well, which also stops corruption. The Committee concluded that while this example was not easy to copy, one lesson that could be generalized was that such success was the result of policy and that in seeking international capital and international talent, Singapore had followed its own policies based on its own situation.

Recommendations for enhanced public governance for speedy and coordinated policy response

37. The Committee emphasizes that global problems need global solutions; no single country can provide solutions to the crisis alone. The current international institutions did not prevent the crisis. The Committee, therefore, urges Member States to consider a new architecture, whereby there is not only globalization of finance but also of regulation and to use the United Nations as the best forum to address such crisis-related issues, to generate a global discussion on their moral aspects and standards of justice and to link these issues with the urgent necessity to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

Recommendations for leadership capacity-building in the public sector in the context of the financial and economic crisis

38. The Committee urges Member States to differentiate between short-term emergency responses and long-term strategic planning and transformation in their response to the financial and economic crisis and its effects. It recommends

formulating timely exit strategies from emergency responses, where appropriate, and recognizing that successful adjustment requires long-term strategic planning.

39. The Committee recommends that the Secretariat and the Economic and Social Council pay due attention to the factor of leadership and new leadership qualities needed in times of crisis. To this end, it commends the new paradigm of public administration, "open government", with its emphasis on citizens as partners and co-producers, instead of "government leadership" alone.

40. It also recommends that policymakers recognize the tendency of citizens not to differentiate Government from State and that they provide objective, balanced information on diagnosis, policies and anticipated impacts, by linking citizens more closely to decision-making processes, and by ensuring a civil service career track that is stable, permanent and well-trained.

41. Recognizing the temptation to centralize power in conditions of crisis, the Committee urges Member States not to seek simplistic solutions but rather to recognize the complexity of State capacities and to strengthen their regulatory frameworks through integrity, accountability, transparency and avoiding State capture.

Recommendations for citizen-centred public service delivery

42. The Committee urges Member States not to lose sight of the purpose of regulation: citizens and the quality of their lives. This would include supporting human resources development in the public sector that aims at citizen-centric governance, supporting the effective use of information and communications technology and e-government towards enhancing citizen engagement.

43. The Committee recommends to the Secretariat that it continue publicizing good examples of innovative citizen participation initiatives through the United Nations Public Service Awards.

Recommendations for transparency and accountability

44. The Committee recommends that the Economic and Social Council continue to promote and enhance transparent and accountable governance structures, processes and tools, particularly through harnessing the transformative power of information and communications technology.

45. The Committee urges Member States to provide regular reports of their actions in response to the financial and economic crisis so that citizens can become fully participatory in managing its effects and its exit and to restore the trust of citizens in government.

46. It also encourages Member States to set standards of conduct and undertake training to encourage a culture of openness within the civil service, to alter incentives away from risk averseness that fosters secrecy and to undertake information campaigns to make citizens aware of their right to information, legislation facilitating this and the benefits for all that will result.

47. The Committee recommends that the Secretariat continue its work to clearly define and comparatively demonstrate the role of information management and knowledge creation in crisis management and development overall, with an

emphasis on both formal and informal mechanisms of public management and citizen engagement.

48. The Committee recommends that the Secretariat undertake a comprehensive and comparative study on targeted social protection programmes for vulnerable populations during times of crisis, including analysis of institutional preparedness for rapid response, vulnerabilities on a macroeconomic and global scale and innovative forms of financing for countries with no fiscal space or safety nets, such as South-South solidarity.

49. The Committee also urges the Secretariat to look into the different ways in which the crisis could be an opportunity to promote a green economy and low-carbon solutions for development, particularly for countries that cannot do so on their own, while supporting the overall work of the United Nations concerning climate change.

C. Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance

50. The Secretariat presented a note (E/C.16/2010/3) highlighting the major activities undertaken by the Secretariat in 2009.

51. The note set out the scope of activities planned for implementation in the biennium 2010-2011 and proposed the strategic framework for the period 2012-2013, with three major functional areas: (a) institutional and human resources development in the public sector; (b) e-government development; and (c) development management and citizen engagement. The note also invited the Committee to review and provide feedback to the Secretariat on its activities intended to assist Governments in meeting their current governance and public administration challenges, particularly in the context of emerging issues and crises. Finally, it highlighted the activities undertaken by the Secretariat to streamline and reform its operations towards results-based and demand-driven approaches, with particular focus on the effective use of information and communications technology and a view to enhancing knowledge management and acquisition towards achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

52. The Director of the Division presented the new strategy of the Division, "Way forward", in its reform initiative and main challenges. Making direct links between the new substantive focuses of the Division and the major issues faced by Member States in three areas, the information age, the world affected by crises, and globalization, where information-sharing and management become central, she explained how the internal organizational restructuring was complemented with improved work modalities based on four main pillars: (a) training and knowledge management; (b) advisory service; (c) research/analysis; and (d) advocacy and learning. Finally, the Director introduced the major products of the Division, including the soon-to-be-launched public administration knowledge space, which will be the Division's substantive, technical and educational one-stop-shop for assisting Member States in their developmental needs concerning public governance and administration. The public administration knowledge space will: (a) make sure that relevant knowledge is easily identifiable and accessible; (b) bring information and communications technology-supported public administration to the service of

development; and (c) connect, create and expand knowledge on how to better manage public affairs and better serve citizens.

53. The Committee welcomed and applauded the positive changes towards the restructuring and reform of the Division and made several recommendations towards accelerating the "Way forward". It urged the Division to: (a) pay due attention to differences among developing countries, for example, small countries, and recognize the meagre information on countries in the South; (b) link the three focus areas through policy analysis; (c) push for greater collaboration and connectivity with all stakeholders through the United Nations Public Administration Network; and (d) increase its impact by leveraging with other international and regional institutions that have greater resources.

54. Specifically, the Committee recommended that the Division focus on accurate, authentic and relevant data and the creation of databases with indicators of significance to public administration, given current matters of concern to Member States, such as: (a) local governments and the resources they receive from the central government; (b) the ratio of public sector employees to the overall population and within public sector budget allocations per service area; (c) indicators that reflect the new model of open government; (d) processes and actions of repositioning the public sector in development; and (e) trends of public administration development per country and according to relevant criteria, such as transparency, accountability and citizen-centric service delivery.

55. The Division welcomed these suggestions and reiterated its willingness to work more closely with the Committee to leverage partnerships in a systematic way and towards creating a joint Division for Public Administration and Development Management-Committee of Experts on Public Administration product, in addition to the organization of meetings and events. The Committee recognized with appreciation the fact that other international organizations, such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the World Bank and the World Economic Forum, and the *Economist* were currently using the indicators of the United Nations e-government survey, one of the Division's products, in their own reports. The Committee also welcomed the public administration knowledge space initiative currently being constructed.

D. Public administration perspective on the theme of the annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council: implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women

56. The Secretariat presented a note (E/C.16/2010/4) entitled "Information and communications technology and gender equality: new opportunities and challenges for public administration to implement internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals". The note analysed the application of information and communications technology in public administration and governance as a tool to help women gain better access to government information and needed social services and to help them participate more effectively in decision-making processes.

57. The note concluded that the empowerment of women and their active participation in e-government programmes would not occur if information and communications technology-supported contents and approaches were not made gender-sensitive and did not explicitly target the removal of gender inequalities. It thus recommended: (a) the development of national information and communications technology policies that ensure the participation of women, gender experts and women's organizations at all stages of policy planning, consultation and implementation; (b) the design, implementation and maintenance by Governments of an enabling environment for the formulation and systematic assessment of gender-sensitive e-government policies, including the appropriate legal, regulatory and institutional arrangements; (c) the implementation of cross-jurisdictional coordination to improve gender mainstreaming in public administration; (d) the involvement of national machineries for the advancement of women in mainstreaming gender-sensitive information and communications technology into administrative processes; and (e) the linking of public administration programmes with e-government strategies to engage both women and men as stakeholders in policy formulation, design, consultation and implementation.

58. The Chair noted that mainstreaming was often reduced to a simple formula of positions in the public sector; yet it did not address the cultural obstacles of inherited traditions and social prejudices that prevented gender equality in form from becoming equality in content.

59. The Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women reviewed the outcomes since the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action for the empowerment of women, noting that the negative consequences of the financial and economic crisis had fallen disproportionately on women. Among the examples of progress made, she noted: (a) increased access to education for girls; (b) policies to address HIV/AIDS, and health budgets to increase gender equality; (c) legal, policy and institutional frameworks to end violence against women and girls; and (d) quotas for women's participation in decision-making. There remained lags in achieving many of the Millennium Development Goals, especially in terms of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy, and there was insufficient attention paid to gender equality dimensions in national development policies and strategies. She detailed the many key roles that information and communications technology and e-governance could play in achieving Goal 3, but warned of the need for regulations and public administration to protect women and girls against its possible abuses, such as trafficking and disempowerment, including by deepening gender stereotypes.

60. Ms. Bethel identified information and communications technology as the primary enabler for achieving the internationally agreed development goals and the Millennium Development Goals addressing gender equality and women's empowerment, including in commerce, government and education, and thus the importance of setting national e-government agendas accordingly. Effective use by women of e-government required accessibility, affordability, cultural and gender relevant content, and adaptation to the scheme of their daily lives, given their double burden of family and work. Especially because women were the bedrock of social and economic development, and emergency responses to the crisis were crowding out e-government policies, she urged the United Nations to elevate the issue to the policy level.

61. Pontso Suzan Matumelo Sekatle (observer) illustrated the benefits of local government and devolution through the case of Lesotho, including in facilitating women's participation in government. Although local governments were only created in 2005, the commitment by members of the Southern African Development Community to achieve at least 30 per cent in women's representation had been exceeded in Lesotho, which had achieved 58 per cent in local councils. Although the space for reversing the cultural practices of gender inequality did not yet exist at the national level or in women's willingness to take on leadership positions even locally, the achievements of local councils in building roads, in land management for the collective good and in giving women experience in public decision-making demonstrated what could be achieved with substantial women's participation.

62. Discussion in the Committee focused on encouraging examples of progress in recent years, such as in Argentina, Brazil, China, India, Morocco, Mozambique and Trinidad and Tobago. The Committee stressed policies that aimed to reduce gender inequality, the causes and positive consequences of women's greater participation in government and elected office, the resulting need for training programmes tailored to women, the distinction between short-term and longer-term policies that could change perceptions and mindsets, such as education, and the demonstrated role of access to information in exposing inequalities in the implementation of apparently egalitarian policies to improve actual practice. Obstacles were also detailed, including reasons for women's lack of access to information and communications technology and e-government, its consequences for women's employment and its effects on the fertility rate, not just political representation, and insufficient action to end female genital mutilation and other harmful practices to women's health and, thus, empowerment. At the same time, the very discussion of this agenda had led in many countries to a change in discourse and to a recognition that gender equality (such as on issues of reproductive health and schooling) concerned both men and women and boys and girls, with progress already made in terms of decisions on family size and prospects for girl children.

Recommendations on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women

63. The Committee recommends that gender equality remain an important goal and that information and communications technology provide a potent tool for advancing women's empowerment, as long as its risks are managed.

64. The Committee urges Member States to take all necessary measures, including enacting and enforcing legislation, to prohibit female genital mutilation.

65. The Committee recommends greater attention be paid to women's underrepresentation in public administration, especially high civil service positions, as a neglected aspect of the goal of gender equality.

66. The Committee recommends that the Secretariat add the collection of relevant data to its knowledge space.

67. The Committee wishes to recognize the monetary value of domestic labour and care work performed mainly by women as an important component of achieving gender equality.

68. The Committee, therefore, recommends that the Secretariat develop a methodology to consider inclusion of such value in official national accounts.

69. The Committee wishes to recognize the work of the United Nations Project Office on Governance in the Republic of Korea with the Asia Pacific Women's Network Center at Sookmyung Women's University on country-specific case studies related to gender and public administration.

E. Session on innovative ways to enrich collaboration between the Committee and the Division

70. Each working group began with a presentation on its mission, strategy, programme of work and activities.

1. Working group I
Development management and citizen engagement

71. The primary concern of the discussion in working group I focused on what could be achieved with limited resources and on how performance could be measured to get "value for money". This included a discussion of the comparative advantage of the Division in relation to other institutions working on similar issues, such as OECD, the virtues of the United Nations (for example neutrality and global inclusiveness and the resulting legitimacy) and the ways that such non-financial resources as imagination and creativity could be leveraged. An important issue left for further discussion was priority themes for the next years in terms of development management. The Chair emphasized the value of the new format of the working groups in providing an opportunity for the Committee to meet with Secretariat staff to explore ways to enhance the impact on development of better development management.

72. The primary recommendations of the working group were to liaise with existing programmes elsewhere, such as the Programme for Innovation in Public Administration in the Mediterranean Region (and its publications on innovation in governance and public administration), and to focus on local public administrations which, unlike their national counterparts, recognize that they do not have the answers and knowledge, get little attention and are seeking advice.

2. Working group II
E-/mobile government development

73. In its discussion, working group II expressed strong support for the work of the Division focused on:

(a) Stakeholder engagement, including modes of interaction with Governments, harmonization of activities with internal and external partners, the private sector and the non-profit sector;

(b) Evaluation of the quality of outputs;

(c) Sources of funding;

(d) Scaling up activities, such as the preparation of templates of international or regional norms for e-government development per sector;

(e) Means of assuring a niche for the Division in e-government development and ensuring programme continuity over time, for example, through additional

memorandums of understanding with specific countries and/or regional groups on sustainable e-government development.

74. The working group recommended raising awareness about Division activities in the area of e-government by the Committee and the Secretariat and the need for resources, as proposed in paragraph 6 (d) of the draft resolution (see chap. I above).

3. Working group III
Institutional and human resources development in the public sector

75. Discussion in working group III focused on understanding the work of the Division in this area, identifying ways the Committee could enrich its work and identifying practical recommendations for the Division. Recommendations include:

(a) Based on a compilation and analysis of public service codes of conduct from 100 Member States for the public administration knowledge space, develop a generic code as a useful guideline for countries that lack a code;

(b) Utilize the particular interests and expertise of Committee members acting as resource persons and ambassadors for the Division and for partnerships and activities in a particular country or region;

(c) Engage with Committee members during and beyond annual sessions, including development of a protocol to formalize cooperation and mutual interaction on the basis of mutual expectations, particular interests, expertise and the network capability of members;

(d) Build a body of case studies with contributions from Committee members and showcase success stories worldwide to encourage Governments to adopt successful approaches and to counteract current prejudices, such as towards African countries.

F. Proposed programme of work and agenda for the next session of the Committee of Experts and preliminary review of the draft report of the Committee

76. The Committee agreed to adopt a multi-year programme, 2011-2013, on the theme, "Public governance for results to improve the quality of human life". Each of the three years will have different subthemes. The subthemes for its tenth session are: a conceptual framework; public governance for results in post-conflict and post-crisis countries; social protection for vulnerable populations; and performance management in governance. Papers on the themes will be prepared by selected Committee experts.

77. The Committee approved the convening of its tenth session from 4 to 8 April 2011 and also approved the following agenda for adoption by the Economic and Social Council:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Public governance for results to improve the quality of human life:
   (a) Conceptual framework;

(b) Post-conflict and post-crisis countries;

(c) Social protection for vulnerable populations;

(d) Performance management in governance (including in regard to the internationally agreed goals and commitments in education, the theme of the 2011 annual ministerial review).

4. Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance.

5. Agenda for the eleventh session of the Committee of Experts.

78. The Committee adopted the draft report of its ninth session.

Annex

List of documents

Document symbol	*Agenda item*	*Title or description*
E/C.16/2010/1	2	Provisional agenda and organization of work
E/C.16/2010/2	3	Challenges to and opportunities for public administration in the context of the financial and economic crisis
E/C.16/2010/3	4	Review of the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance
E/C.16/2010/4	5	Information and communications technology and gender equality: new opportunities and challenges for public administration to implement the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

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